

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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P 262149Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1039

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 3697

EXDIS/STADIS //////////////////////////////////////

FOR ARA/PAN

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN, PQ

SUBJ: PANAMA REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING, JUNE 26, 1974

REF: PANAMA 3238

1. PRC MEETING OPENED WITH VIEWING OF NBC VIDEO TAPE DOCUMENTARY ON PAN CANAL. FEELING OF VIEWERS WAS THAT DCOUMENTARY STRESSED ELEMENTS OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT SITUATION AND EFFORTS ON BOTH SIDES TO ACHIEVE PACIFIC SOLUTION FOR OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS FARED LESS WELL IN PRESENTATION.

2. AMBASSADOR JORDEN REPORTED ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO CHIRIQUI AND BOCAS DEL TORO PROVINCES WITH GENERAL TORRIJOS, COVERING BRIEFLY SUBJECTS OF BANANAS, SEIZURE OF TUNA BOAT, RAFAELLO, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FMS, AND GOP-'S FINANCIAL PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE RESULTED FROM MAINTENANCE OF NATIONAL GUARD BATTALION IN MIDDLE EAST.

3. AMBASSADOR THEN TOOK UP PROBLEM OF CANAL ZONE SQUATTERS, HIS RECENT CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL TORRIJOS ABOUT THE MATTER, AND REVIEWED PROPOSALS MADE BY NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDER. AMBASSADOR REPORTED THAT GENERAL HAD REACTED POSITIVELY, NOTING THAT SQUATTERS WERE PROBLEM
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FOR BOTH SIDES, AND SAID HE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT

IT. GENERAL TORRIJOS HAD SAID FIRST STEP WOULD BE FOR HIM TO TALK TO SOME OF THE PEOPLE.

4. PRC PRINCIPALS NOTED THAT PANAMA MORNING PAPERS FOR JUNE 26 FEATURED PROMINENTLY MEETING GENERAL TORRIJOS HELD YESTERDAY (JUNE 25) WITH SPOKESMEN FOR SQUATTERS LIVING IN THE LOWER MADDEN DAM AREA. ARTICLES REPORTED THAT GENERAL EMPHASIZED NEED TO RELOCATE SQUATTERS IN ORDER TO PROTECT WATER SHED AREAS FOR GATUN LAKE AND WATER SUPPLY FOR CANAL.

5. AMBASSADOR MENTIONED BENERAL'S COMMENTS THAT HE HOPED TIMBER CUTTING BY SQUATTERS COULD BE STOPPED WITHIN 30 DAYS. AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO TORRIJOS' PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH POINT OF CONTACT OR TEAM TO WORK WITH NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS, SAYING GENERAL FIRST WISHED TO INTRODUCE AMBASSADOR TO SENIOR NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS, AFTER WHICH TIME PLANS COULD GO FORWARD FOR JOINT MEETINGS ON SQUALLTER PROBLEMS.

6. AMBASSADOR PROPOSED THAT DCM REPRESENT EMBASSY ON SUCH TEAM, AT LEAST INITIALLY, TO MEET WITH DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES FOR PANCANAL AND SOTHCOM. PRC PRINCIPALS AGREED ON NEED TO GIVE PROPOSAL A TRY. SOUTHCOM INDICATED THAT J-3 WOULD BE REPRESENTATIVE AND PANCANAL DESIGNATED DIRECTOR FOR CIVIL AFFAIRS. NEXT MOVE IS CLEARLY UP TO GENERAL TORRIJOS, TO INRODUCE AMBASSADOR TO GN OFFICERS, AND REACH AGREEMENT ON GOP GROUP TO MEET WITH PRC SUB-GROUP ON SQUATTER PROBLEM.

7. AMBASSADOR REFERRED BRIEFLY TO PANAMA CONTINGENCY PLAN, WHICH HE UNDERSTOOD WAS BEING DISCUSSED IN WASHINGTON ON JUNE 26 AND FACT THAT DRAFT PLAN HAD NOT BEEN REVIEWED PREVIOUSLY BY PANCANAL. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD BE LOOKING INTO PROBLEM AND IT WOULD BE SUBJECT OF LATER DISCUSSION IN PRC.

8. GOVERNOR PARKER THEN REVIEWED NUMBER OF ITEMS, REFERRING TO MEMORANDUM CONCERNING THE CANAL ZONE LATIN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES WHICH HAD BEEN PREPARED FOR COMMENT
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BY THE PRC PRINCIPALS. HE SAID IT WAS HIS MOST URGENT PROBLEM. PRINCIPALS AGREED TO STUDY MEMO AND HAVE THEIR COMMENTS READY SHORTLY.

9. GOVERNOR REFERRED TO "POLITICAL ACTIMITIES" OF GOP CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVE (PACIFIC SIDE, CANAL ZONE) HERMELINDA FUENTES, WHO RESIDES IN CANAL ZONE WITH HER FATHER (A CANAL ZONE EMPLOYEE) AND FACT THAT CZG WOULD HAVE TO WARN HER

FATHER CONCERNING UNWARRANTED USE OF HIS HOME, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND POST OFFICE BOX IN CONNECTION WITH HER ACTIVITIES.

10 GOVERNOR MENTIONED RECENT VISIT TO CANAL ZONE BY DEPUTY TREATY NEGOTIATOR BELL AND PANAMANIAN AMBASSADOR GONZALEZ REVILLA. GOVERNOR SAID THAT HIS REPORTS WERE ALL VERY FAVORABLE BUT HE EXPRESSED SOME REGRET THAT VISITORS SEEMED NOT TO HAVE NOTED DEGREE TO WHICH HIGH LEVEL PANAMANIAN PARTICIPATION IN OPERATIONS OF CZG/PCC HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE WAS CERTAIN IT HAD NOT GONE UNNOTICED.

11. GOVERNOR PARKER REPORTED THAT CZG HAS AGREED TO PAY SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF EXPENSE FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSED FREEWAY TO RUN FROM CHORRERA TO TOCUMEN. HE MENTIONED HIS VISIT TO PANAMANIAN NAUTICAL SCHOOL (MERCHANT MARINE) WHICH PANCANAL IS ASSISTING WITH ITS TRAINING PROGRAM. HE NOTED THAT FIRST GRADUATING CLASS HAS ALREADY BEEN ASSURED OF EMPLOYMENT ON TAKCERS BY US FIRM.

12. MAJOR GENERAL HENRY REPORTED ON COMMUNICATIONS CABLE EXTENDING BETWEEN FAA, BALBOA, AND TOCUMEN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. HE SAID STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO ALLEVIATE PROBLEMS SHOULD THEY ARISE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, NOTING THAT MILITARY MAINTENANCE WOULD BE PROVIDED UNTIL THE CABLE IS TRANSFERRED TO THE GOP AND THAT FAA WOULD ARRANGE WITH IRHE FOR ALTERNATE CIRCUITS IF MAINTENANCE BECAME COST PROHIBITIVE (E. G., PRIOR TO INSTALLATION AND FUNCTIONING OF MICROWAVE SYSTEM BETWEEN ANCON HILL AND TOCUMEN).

13. GENERAL HENRY ALSO REPORTED THAT GENERAL ROSSON WOULD BE MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER AND DEPUTY
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NEGOTIATOR BELL, AT THEIR REQUEST, AT CONTADORA ISLAND, ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 27.
JORDEN

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